156.

The exalted State of the faithful Miniſters of Chriſt, after Death, deſcribed and conſidered.

A

SERMON,

Occaſioned by the

DEATH

OF THE

Rev. Mr. GEO. WHITEFIELD,

Late Chaplain to the RIGHT HONOURABLE
The Counteſs of HUNTINGDON,
Who died at Newberry, in New-England,
Sept. 30, 1770, in the 56th Year of his Age.
Preached on Sabbath-Day Evening, Dec. 2, 1770.

By JOHN LANGFORD,
Miniſter of the Goſpel, and Paſtor of that Part of the Church of Chriſt, meeting in Black's-Fields, Southwark.

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PREFACE.

THE following Diſcourſe was preached by the Author, as a Taken of Reſpect to the Memory of that truly faithful, and eminent Servant of Chriſt, the late Rev. Mr. GEORGE WHITEFIELD; and in Compliance with the Requeſts of many who heard it, now appears in Print.

The Author is ſenſible, that there have been many excellent Sermons preached on the mournful Occaſion, more worthy to make their Appearance in Public than his own; yet flatters himſelf, that mean as it is, it will be received by the real Chriſtian, in the Spirit of Love.

That

PREFACE.

That it may be as profitable to the Reader, as the Lord made it to many who heard it, the Author commits it to the Bleſſing of God, who only can teach to profit.

Southwark,
Dec. 22, 1770.

BRITISH MUSEUM

DANIEL,

DANIEL, XII. 3. Laſt Clauſe.

—And they that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever.

THIS Part of *Daniel*'s Propheſy, contains an Account of a Time of exceeding great Trouble, that ſhould come on the Church and People of God. But for their Comfort, *Daniel* is favoured with a View of *Michael*, the great Prince, ſtanding ready to aſſiſt, ſupport, and deliver them, as you have an Account in the firſt Verſe of the Chapter, of which my Text is a Part. *And at that Time ſhall* Michael *ſtand up, the great Prince, which ſtandeth for the Children of thy People; and there ſhall be*

a Time of Trouble, ſuch as never was ſince there was a Nation, even to that ſame Time: And at that Time thy People ſhall be delivered, every one that ſhall be found written in the Book.

I do not pretend to ſay what this Time of Trouble is, or to what it refers: Expoſitors differ about it; ſome repreſent it as the Time of Trouble that will come upon the Wicked and Ungodly, at the general Judgment of the great Day. Others repreſent it as the Time of Trouble in the laſt Perſecution againſt the People of God, at the Time of the Fall of Anti-Chriſt; or in the laſt Struggles of the Beaſt, mentioned in *Revelations*, Ch. xvi.

For my own Part, I acknowledge the former Senſe appears moſt conſiſtent with the Verſe immediately following, which repreſents this Time of Trouble, and to whom it will be ſo, Ver. 2. *And many of*

of them that ſleep in the Duſt ſhall awake, ſome to everlaſting Life, and ſome to ſhame and everlaſting Contempt. This certainly refers to the general Reſurrection of the Bodies of all Men, Saints and Sinners; for the Word *many*, is uſed for all, as *Romans* v. 15.

But in a more limited Senſe, it may reſpect the Reſurrection of the Juſt in particular, who ſhall riſe firſt, as the Apoſtle to the *Theſſalonians* obſerves, *The Dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt.* 1 Theſſalonians, iv. 16. In this Verſe it is obſervable, that Death is compared to a Sleep; a Sleep, you know, is a State of Inactivity; the Senſes are faſt bound up, and the Body is in an inactive State; ſo is the Sleep of Death, as is finely deſcribed by *Solomon, Eccleſiaſtes*, ix. 10. *For there is no Work, Device, Wiſdom, nor Knowledge in the Grave, whither thou goeſt.* Therefore the Reſurrection may be called an awaking from Sleep in the Duſt, and

which

which will be effected by the Power of God, who will call to the Earth, to give up its Dead. This will be an awful Time, a Time of great Trouble to the Wicked, for they ſhall riſe to ſhame and everlaſting Contempt. But the Righteous ſhall ariſe from the Sleep of Death, and be put into the full Poſſeſſion of everlaſting Life. This delightful, awful Truth, is confirmed by our bleſſed Lord himſelf, *John* v. 28, 29. *For the Hour is coming, in which all that are in the Graves ſhall hear his Voice, and ſhall come forth; they that have done good, unto the Reſurrection of Life; and they that have done evil, unto the Reſurrection of Damnation.* Oh! awful State of the Wicked. Well may it be called Shame and Contempt, as they will be looked upon as unworthy the Notice of God, unleſs to puniſh them; they ſhall be caſt out of his Preſence, while thoſe who are raiſed firſt (i. e. the Juſt) ſhall be raiſed to everlaſting Life, as is more fully ſet forth, *Matthew* xxv.

34,

34, 41, 56. *Then ſhall the King ſay to them on his right Hand, Come ye Bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. Then ſhall he ſay unto them on his left Hand, Depart from me ye Curſed, into everlaſting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels; theſe ſhall go away into everlaſting Puniſhment, but the Righteous in Life eternal.* Theſe Paſſages gives us a View of the glorious State and Happineſs of the Saints, whoſe Names are written in the Lambs Book of Life, at the Morning of the Reſurrection; the Happineſs of their Souls and Bodies alſo. The ſame delightful and encouraging Truth is exhibited in the Verſe from which I have choſen my Text, *And they that be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the Brightneſs of the Firmament; and that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever.* Having introduced the Text, and viewed its Connection, it is neceſſary I ſhould inform you, that I do not intend much

much Enlargement on the firſt Clauſe of the Verſe, as the latter Part of it is more particularly ſuited to the preſent Occaſion: Nevertheleſs, I will give you a brief Paraphraſe of it: *And they that be wiſe:* Wiſe, how? not with carnal Wiſdom, but wiſe unto Salvation; wiſe with that Wiſdom that is from above; wiſe to know themſelves as loſt Sinners; wiſe to know Chriſt as the Way of Salvation, as God's appointed Way of Salvation; theſe are repreſented as ſhining in the World of Glory, as the *Brightneſs of the Firmament:* This is an emphatic Deſcription of their State of compleat Felicity beyond the Grave, in Soul and Body: A State of compleat Glorification to the Saints, after the Reſurrection of the Body. True it is, indeed, that the Soul enters into Glory, when diſlodged from the Body; but when that is raiſed, and the Soul again united with it, both ſhall ſhare in the Glory of the Lord, and the mortal Part put on Immortality, and be

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made like the glorious Body of Chriſt. This their State of Exaltation and Glory being repreſented as being like the Brightneſs of the Firmament, and they ſhining in it, may intimate, the Perfection and Beauty of it, as a perfect Day, and clear ſerene Sky, without a Cloud, or the Appearance of a Storm, either from the Devil, the World, or their own Hearts: The Beauty and Grandeur of their State is evidently implied in this elegant Deſcription of it: They will ſhine, not mourn; ſhine with great Luſtre, even that which Chriſt will put upon them; they will derive all their Brightneſs from him.

But I will now proceed to conſider more particularly the Words of the Text, which contain a ſhort but full Account of the peculiar Honour that will be conferred on the faithful Servants of Chriſt, the Miniſters of the Goſpel, in the World of Glory; they are to ſhine as Stars for ever

and

and ever; Chriſt holds them as Stars in his right Hand upon Earth, and they ſhall ſhine as Stars for ever in Heaven. Some Perſons have attempted to prove, from this Paſſage, that there will be different Degrees of Happineſs in Glory: But ſuch a Notion cannot be fairly proved by it, as there is not any good Reaſon for drawing ſuch an Inference from it. I readily grant, that Chriſt's Miniſters, and faithful Followers, are diſtinctly characteriſed in the Text; and their Stations in Glory are diſtinctly deſcribed; yet this does not prove, that the Former will enjoy more of the divine Favours than the Latter, or that there will be any the leaſt Difference in their Happineſs, or that one will not be as much glorified as the other. All that appears to me, as intended in general in the Words, is this, namely, That in the World of Glory, where thoſe that are wiſe are repreſented as ſhining as the Brightneſs of the Firmament; and Miniſters, as they

that

that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever; that the Former will ever behold the Latter, as ſhining and bright Stars, that were held in *Chriſt*'s Hand, and uſed by him as Inſtruments for their Souls good in this World. Inſtruments that God raiſed up for their Comfort and Conſolation in the Church Militant, and when they reach the Church Triumphant, they will appear Stars, to ſhine for ever and ever, to the Glory of King *Jeſus*: That our Thoughts may take a more enlarged View of this pleaſing Subject, I will ſpeak to the following Things:

Firſt, Enquire who the Perſons are, as are ſaid to turn many to Righteouſneſs.

Secondly, Point out to you, in what Reſpects they may be ſaid to turn many to Righteouſneſs.

Thirdly, View their Happineſs in a future World, who are honoured in being made the Inſtruments of ſpiritual Good to others, as deſcribed in my Text; *And they that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever.* Theſe Things conſidered, will make Way for a few Obſervations, as an Improvement to the Subject. I begin with the Firſt of them; namely, To enquire who the Perſons are, as are ſaid to turn many to Righteouſneſs: I have already given you to underſtand, that I humbly conceive they are the honoured Servants of the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Miniſters of the Goſpel of the Grace of God, whom he qualifies for the Work, as well as calls them to it. Theſe are the Perſons evidently refered to in the Text, and the Learned in general are agreed in their Sentiments about it, and give the above Senſe of it. But it is neceſſary to obſerve, that not all who bear the outward Character, or wear the external Garb of *Chriſt*'s Miniſters,

niſters, are intended; No, for there are nominal Miniſters, as well as falſe and nominal Profeſſors of Religion. *For they are not all Iſrael, which are of Iſrael.* *Romans* ix. 6.

There is a Poſſibility for Perſons to intrude themſelves into this ſacred Office, and are not ſuch as are qualified for it, nor ſent by *Chriſt* into it, *Ezekiel* xiii. 6. All ſuch falſe Miniſters, with all falſe Profeſſors of the Goſpel, will not ſhine in Glory, but be puniſhed as Hypocrites in Hell, *Matthew* vii. 22. From theſe Conſiderations, it is plain, that only true Miniſters of *Chriſt* are intended, for they are his ſent Servants, and made by him Inſtruments of Good to his People; when he holds them in his Hand, they ſhine to his Glory; but when he does not, their Miniſtry is to no Purpoſe. Theſe his Miniſters are ſet forth by various figurative Expreſſions in Scripture, and they are repreſented under different Names, particu-

larly in the Book of *Revelations*, Ch. ii. 5. and xi. 4. where they are called Candleſticks, to carry or bear the Light of Goſpel Truths; which Truths ſhine forth in their Preaching and Lives, to the Glory of *Chriſt*. They are alſo called Stars, *Revelations* i. 20. (as in my Text) to denote that *Chriſt* uſeth them as Lights to others. But I proceed,

Secondly, to ſhow you in what Reſpect *Chriſt*'s faithful Miniſters may be ſaid to turn many to Righteouſneſs; I would not have you conclude, from what I have ſaid, that Miniſters are the eſſential Cauſes of ſuch an amazing Change in others; ſuch an Aſſertion would rob *Chriſt* of his Glory, and take the Crown from his Head, and put it on the Heads of Miniſters: No, they are only Inſtruments in his Hand, of turning many to Righteouſneſs.

By

By Righteouſneſs, as it ſtands oppoſed to Unrighteouſneſs, is to be underſtood Holineſs; and many being turned unto it, may ſignify their being brought from walking in the Ways of Sin, to walk and delight in the Ways of Holineſs. This is done miniſterially, when God works, by his Spirit, with the Word preached; changing the Sinner's Heart and Affections; inclining and enabling him to walk in the Ways of *Chriſt*, which are Ways of Holineſs, *Iſaiah* xxxv. 8. Or, if by Righteouſneſs, we underſtand ſuch a Righteouſneſs as will juſtify Men before a righteous God, *Chriſt*'s Miniſters turn many to it, by holding up Chriſt, and a Righteouſneſs wrought out by him, which being imputed to the Sinner, juſtifies the ungodly: In a Word, *Chriſt*, by his Servants, is held forth as the Lord, our Righteouſneſs and Strength, and as the Ground, the only Ground of a Sinners Hope of Acceptance before God.

But before I conclude this Head, I will mention a few Particulars, to ſhew, at what Time the Miniſters of the Goſpel are made Inſtruments of turning many to Righteouſneſs: Firſt, The Miniſtry of the Word is inſtrumental for the turning of many, or any, to Righteouſneſs, when God, by his Spirit, attends it with his divine Power, and makes it profitable to the Souls of Men. The moſt eminent Miniſters in the Church, who have been favoured with the greateſt Gifts and Abilities, have found that their Miniſtrations are not crowned with Succeſs, when not attended with divine Power. This the late much honoured Servant of *Chriſt*, the Rev. Mr. WHITFIELD, well knew, who, with every faithful Miniſter, will acknowledge with the inſpired Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* iii. 8. *So then neither is he that planteth any Thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the Increaſe.* Conſiſtent to this Declaration, was the Reply of one of the Reformers (*Luther*) to *Melancton*,

Melancton, whoſe Zeal was ſo great at his firſt coming forth, to preach the everlaſting Goſpel, that he thought, by his preaching, he could convert the whole World. But he found he was miſtaken; and ſome Time after, his Friend and fellow Labourer in the Goſpel (*Luther*) told him, he knew the Devil, the old Serpent, would prove too ſtrong for young *Melancton* to conquer, without God's Help. And it is the ſame in this Reſpect, at this Time, as it was in the more early Days of the Goſpel; for Miniſters may, yea do, lift up their Voices, and cry too, and weep over poor Sinners; but unleſs the Spirit of the Lord ſpeak to the Heart, it will be to no Effect. This Work of the Spirit of God, is deſcribed, *Pſalm* xlv. 5. *Thine Arrows are ſharp in the Hearts of the King's Enemies, whereby the People fall under thee. Till God's Arrows are fixed in the Hearts of Sinners, we may ſpend our Breath for naught, Iſaiah* liii. 1. But when he ſends forth his Arrows,

rows, the Work, the great Work of convincing Sinners is done.

Further, the Miniſters of the Word may be ſaid to turn many to Righteouſneſs, when Sinners, by the Inſtrumentality of the Word they preach, are brought to think of their Ways, and ſeek after the Lord *Chriſt*. When the Apoſtle *Peter* preached that Sermon, on the Day of Pentecoſt, under which ſo great a Multitude as Three Thouſand Souls were convinced, as you read, *Acts* ii. 41. To whom, or what was ſo remarkable Succeſs owing, to the Preacher? No, but to the divine irreſiſtible Power of the Spirit of God, as is plain from *Acts* ii. 37. *Now when they heard this, they were pricked to the Heart, and ſaid to* Peter, *and to the Reſt of the Apoſtles, Men and Brethren, What ſhall we do?* The Conviction of the Jaylor, did not ariſe from the Prayers and Praiſes of impriſoned *Paul* and *Silas*; nor did the Earthquake, which

which ſhook the Foundations of the Priſon, cauſe him to cry out, trembling, *Sirs, What muſt I do to be ſaved, Acts* xvi. 30. No, this cry was put into his Heart, by that divine Spirit, who only can convince of Sin, and whoſe Work and Office it is ſo to do, *John* xvi. 8, 9. And may I not, with ſafety aſſert, that if the Foundations of this Place, where we are now aſſembled, were to be ſhaken by a great Earthquake, at this Inſtant, the Hearts of Sinners would remain as hard or harder than a Rock, unleſs God's Spirit uſeth his Word as an Hammer to break the Rock in Pieces, *Jeremiah*, xxiii. 29.

Should any enquire, wherefore doth God employ Miniſters as Inſtruments in turning Men to Righteouſneſs, when he can do that Work without them? To ſuch an Enquiry, I anſwer: It hath pleaſed God, who doth all Things right, to qualify his Miniſters for this End, and make Uſe

of them in every Age of the Church, to make known the Way of Salvation. Infinite Wiſdom, certainly knew who were the fitteſt to be his Ambaſſadors, whether Angels or Men: Angels appear unfit, as they are not intereſted in the Salvation of *Chriſt*, or the Bleſſings of Redemption by him: For this Reaſon, it hath pleaſed the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is Head of the Church, to ſend Men, who are intereſted in both; Men, who are the Subjects of the ſame Temptations and Afflictions, as the Saints in general are liable to: And as God hath, in all Ages, raiſed up ſuch, and worked by them, we have Reaſon to believe, he will continue to raiſe up and bleſs a Goſpel Miniſtry, as long as he hath a profeſſing People in the World.

The Truth of theſe Obſervations appear, if we only conſider the Lord's Kindneſs to us, on whom the Ends of the World are come, in continuing among us many faithful

ful Embaſſadours of *Chriſt*. But they are alſo confirmed, from the Miniſtrations of *Chriſt*'s Servants, who have finiſhed their Work, and are now in Heaven; many of whom were remarkably ſucceſsful in their Work, the Spirit of the Lord working with them: Amongſt theſe, we may mention, in particular, the late Mr. WHITFIELD, whoſe Life, Miniſtration, and abundant Succeſs, are well known; and it was God who raiſed him up, and continued him ſo many Years in the Church a ſhining Light, and in the Midſt of Abundance of Labours, Afflictions, Temptations and Perſecutions, kept him faithful to Death.

I believe it may be ſaid, that (ſince the Time of the Reformation) no one Miniſter of the Goſpel hath been ſo univerſally ſucceſsful in the Work of *Chriſt* in general, as he was. Certainly he was one of the highly favoured Servants of God, raiſed up

for turning many (I was going to ſay Thouſands) to Righteouſneſs. I may add, without being chargeable with praiſing the Man, or incurring the Diſpleaſure of any, that I believe God has owned him, for maintaining and ſpreading the Religion of *Chriſt* in the World, under his Miniſtry. Many precious Souls, in every Part of it, were taught to ſeek after *Jeſus Chriſt* and Salvation by him; and ſorry am I to think, that any ſhould forget to love and ſpeak well of him, as an Inſtrument of Good to them, and ſo far act the ungrateful Part to that God who made him ſo.

But may it not be added, there are many who ſuſtain the ſame Office he did (I mean Miniſters of the Goſpel) who have Reaſon to bleſs God they ever heard him. But I muſt forbear enlarging on theſe Things at preſent, and ſpeak to them by and by. I now come to conſider the laſt general Head, which is,

Thirdly,

Thirdly, To conſider ſomething of that exalted State, to which faithful Miniſters are advanced in the World of Glory, as deſcribed in my Text. *They ſhall ſhine as Stars for ever and ever.* O, bliſsfull State! O glorious Situation, to be taken from ſhining on Earth, to ſhine in Heaven for evermore, as Stars of the firſt Magnitude; to aſcribe Glory to that Grace that ſaved them, and made them inſtrumental in ſaving others. This Deſcription will be greatly heightened, if we only take a View of the State Miniſters are in the preſent World, as a mixed one, conſiſting of Light and Darkneſs, Joy and Sorrow: As it is reſpecting the Saints, ſo it is with Miniſters; they have ſometimes Joy in their Souls, and ſometimes Darkneſs and Heavineſs, unprofitable to themſelves and others. But not ſo with them in Heaven, they ſhall ſhine as Stars there, in all the Brightneſs that the Glory of *Chriſt* can put upon them; they ſhall ſhine as Stars without

without a Cloud, without any Darkneſs; and they ſhall ſhine for ever; that is, keep continually perfectly, and for ever ſhining, without Sin or Sorrow to eclipſe their Brightneſs. This is the Perfection of Happineſs and Glory, which both Miniſters and People ſhall poſſeſs in the Preſence of God and the Lamb: And as Stars derive all their Light from the Sun, ſo ſhall the Stars (*i. e.* Miniſters) in the Church Triumphant, derive all their Light and Luſtre from *Chriſt*, the great Sun of Righteouſneſs. But further, they are to ſhine for ever and ever, which repreſents the Eternity or Continuation of that Life of Fruition and Enjoyment, of which they partake in the heavenly World.

Having conſidered what was firſt propoſed, I will make a few Remarks from it; in doing which, I ſhall have an Opportunity of mentioning many Things relative to the late Rev. Mr. WHITFIELD.

Firſt,

First, Is it ſo? That they that are wiſe, are to ſhine as the Brightneſs of the Firmament; and they that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever: Then, how infinitely happy? How tranſcendantly happy are our Friends, who have died in the Lord, now they are in Glory? Could we view them, and behold their Employments there, we ſhould not wiſh for them to leave it, and return to our World of Sin again: No, we ſhould wiſh to be with them: Or could we view theſe Stars, I mean the Servants of God, the Miniſters of the Goſpel, ſhining in their Orbits in Glory, reflecting eternal Praiſe and Honour to the Grace of God, that exalted them to that State, I am ſure we ſhould not wiſh them in this World again, although they were eminently uſeful while in it. For if we conſider the Toil and Labour attendant upon the Work of the Miniſtry, it appears to be an hard Work; Miniſters are often

tired

tired in it, though not tired of it: Who then would wiſh the Servant of *Chriſt*, who hath finiſhed his Maſter's Work, and is entered into Reſt, back to his Toil and Labour again? ſurely none.

What I have juſt obſerved of Miniſters, and the Work in which they are engaged, namely, That they are frequently tired in it, but not weary of it, was well known by that honoured Servant of *Chriſt*, whoſe lamented Death occaſioned this Diſcourſe; his Labours were abundant even to the laſt, for his great Weakneſs of Body did not hinder him from a diligent and faithful Performance of his Maſter's Work.

But that being finiſhed, he is gone to Reſt, and now lives without being diſturbed by perfidious Friends, or perſecuting Enemies; without Darkneſs in Providence; without Fears or Diſtreſſes: He is now one of thoſe Stars, which ſhine for ever and ever; he

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is called from mourning to rejoiceing, and from praying to praiſing; there is, therefore, no Cauſe to mourn for him, but rather to remember that, that God who raiſed him up; that God who raiſed other Miniſters up, to preach his precious Goſpel, can raiſe up others, and make them as uſeful as he hath been, to anſwer the Purpoſes of his own Glory. But,

Secondly, As Miniſters who are Inſtruments in the Lord's Hand, of turning many to Righteouſneſs, are taken from the Church by Death, this ſhould lead the Lord's People to apply by Prayer, to the God of Sion, that he would ſend forth more Labourers into his Vineyard: It is a Loſs to the Church, when any Miniſter is called from it. But may we never forget, that God is not at a Loſs to do his own Work; he can call by whom he will call, and ſend by whom he will ſend: Let our Petition then be to the God of Grace,

to ſend forth more Labourers into his Vineyard, ſuch as he ſhall own, approve, and bleſs.

Thirdly, What a happy Meeting, what a triumphant Meeting will that be, when both Miniſters and People ſhall meet never to part, and ſhine in the Glory of Divine Grace, and aſcribe univerſal Glory to him, that ſits on the Throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever? On Earth they have many ſorrowful Meetings; Miniſters mourning over the Lifeleſs, and barren State of the Souls of their Hearers, and the People mourning the Loſs of Miniſters of the Word. Theſe Things produce ſorrowing; but in the heavenly World, in the Church Triumphant, Miniſters and People will meet never to part more, without a Cloud, Sin or Sorrow.

But I muſt not further enlarge; I ſuppoſe it is expected, I ſhould ſay ſomething more relative to the Life, Miniſtrations, and Death of the late Rev. Mr. WHITEFIELD, and in applying myſelf thereto, I ſhall uſe Brevity, and only mention thoſe Things, in which I humbly conceive, the Grace of God ſo eminently ſhone forth in him. I need not expend any of your Time, in giving an Account of his Birth, Manner of Life, &c. before he entered into the ſacred Work of the Miniſtry. Theſe Things his own Hand hath pen'd long ſince. * I ſhall only remark, that from his own Account of what God did for him, and wrought in him, it evidently appeared, that he was a Miniſter qualified and ſent forth by *Chriſt* himſelf, well furniſhed with the Beſt of all Materials; the Grace of God, and a rich

* See a Pamphlet, entitled, "A full Account of the Life and Dealings of God, with Mr. WHITEFIELD," written by himſelf. Page 5.

Experience of it in his own Soul, and the Seeds of Grace were ſown in his Heart, in the early Part of his Life; at which Time he was under a ſerious Concern about his own Soul: And I muſt ſay, if a Miniſter hath no Concern about his own Soul, it is not likely he ſhould be much concerned about the Souls of others.

Mr. WHITEFIELD was favoured with a Univerſity Education, which being ſanctified by the Grace of God, and joined with good natural Abilities, rendered him an acceptable Preacher among the Generality of Hearers. He was ordained at *Glouceſter*, in the Year 1736, by the Biſhop of *Glouceſter*, when he was about Twenty-two Years of Age; and from that Time till the Time of his Death, continued a zealous, laborious, faithful Miniſter of the Goſpel of *Chriſt*, labouring near Thirty-five Years in the Lord's Vineyard, with abundant Succeſs, both in *England* and *America*, declaring

declaring, with all Boldneſs, the whole Counſel of God, ſo far as it was made known to him. In Principles he was a *Calviniſt*, and maintained the eſſential Doctrines of Grace, as revealed in the Goſpel, not only in his Judgment, but in his public Miniſtrations; theſe following in particular, to wit; The Doctrine of the fall and Depravity of Man; the Doctrine of God's free and everlaſting Love, in electing his People to Life and Salvation in *Chriſt* from Eternity; the Doctrine of free and full Juſtification, by the Imputation of *Chriſt*'s compleat Righteouſneſs to the Sinner; the Doctrine of the Work of God's Holy Spirit, in and upon the Hearts of God's People; and the Doctrine of the final Perſeverance of the Saints, to eternal Glory. * In the firm Belief of theſe great and precious Truths, he lived and died.

There

* It muſt be acknowledged, that Mr. WHITEFIELD, in the former Part of his Miniſtry, had not ſo clear a Diſcern-

There were many Circumſtances attending Mr. WHITEFIELD as a Miniſter, which conſpired to render the Grace of God more conſpicuous, as to its powerful Reign in his Heart, and Influence in his Life:

Diſcernment of theſe peculiar Doctrines of the Goſpel, as what he was favoured with in the latter Years of his Life, as appears from Part of a Preface, wrote by the Rev. Mr. *Gilbert Tennant*, dated *Philadelphia*, *May* 30, 1746, and prefixed to Mr. WHITEFIELD's Sermons, publiſhed at that Time and Place; and which is worth tranſcribing in this Note, as it will ſhew in what high Eſteem Mr. *Tennant* held Mr. WHITEFIELD. "Theſe importing Points (refering to what I have mentioned above) he mainly inſiſts upon with Clearneſs, Pungency, and Pathos; what though there have been ſome exceptionable, unguarded Expreſſions in his former Writings, is this to be wondered at, conſidering his young Years, ſtrong Paſſions, Education in *Armenian* Principles, and the continued hurry of his Labours in Preaching, writing Letters, Diſcourſing with People in the Places where he travelled, having withal but little Time to ſtudy? Should not that Charity, that hopes all Things that are good, as far as there is any Reaſon for it, induce us to put a favourable Conſtruction on them, at leaſt in his Deſigns."

For

For Inſtance, the Danger he was in of being filled with Pride, and carried away, as it were, with the Tide of popular Applauſe: But the powerful Grace of *Chriſt* kept him from the threatening Evil. Add to this, that among the vaſt Multitudes that flocked to hear him, there were Perſons of all Sorts, not only the Poor, but the Rich, and the Learned; Perſons of different Sentiments, and attending from various Motives. His Converſation alſo, as well as his Preaching, was with and among the great Ones of the Earth. What Grace then muſt that be, which kept him faithful in all Things?

Further, the abundant Succeſs that attended him in his Work, evidenced, that the Grace of God prevailed in his Heart, and kept him humble. His Succeſs in general, not only in *London*, and various Towns in *England* and *Wales*, but alſo in *America*,

America, where he was made inſtrumental of much Good, particularly at *Georgia*, at which Place he, with the Aſſiſtance of others, eſtabliſhed an Orphan Houſe, which, at this Time, is in a flouriſhing State, and for which he raiſed, and faithfully applied, large Sums, and alſo contributed largely towards it himſelf. The Grace of God ſtrengthened him in that great Undertaking, and his Soul was fired with Love to precious Souls, and that carried him above every Difficulty, and beyond the Fear of Danger.

His laſt Voyage to *America*, and his Labours when there, which were abundant, muſt be attended with great Fatigue, and probably was a Means of bringing him to his End. A Letter from him, received by his Friends in *London*, informed them, that ſo numerous were the Invitations to preach the Goſpel, which he had received from all Parts in *America*, that if he

preached

preached every Day in the Week, he could not have anſwered them all in a Twelve Month. Well, his End was as glorious, and as glorifying to the Grace of God, as his Life and Miniſtrations had been; for he died (ſhall I ſay died, he fell aſleep in *Jeſus*) like the ſetting Sun, without a Sigh or Groan; diſmiſſed on the Sabbath Day from his Lord's Work, into his Reſt. It ſeems he was, before he died, remarkably importunate with God in Prayer, and was heard (by his Friend and fellow Traveller) to requeſt of the Lord, that if it pleaſed him, he might finiſh his Work that Day (or to that Effect) and his Deſire was granted; for when he had ended Prayer, he ſent his Friend to call the Maſter of the Houſe; but before they came to him, he had breathed out his Soul, and is now a ſhining Star in Glory. Thus died this faithful Servant of *Chriſt*, on Lord's Day Morning, *Sept.* 30, 1770, after a Life of Suffering and Service, conſiſting of 56 Years.

But after all that hath been ſaid, it is likely many will ſay, you have only mentioned thoſe Things concerning Mr. WHITEFIELD, that were valuable and worthy Immitation; but you have not ſaid any Thing of his Faults, or particulariſed them. I hope ſuch will remember, I have not ſaid he was without Faults; for I may ſay ſafely, as our Lord ſaid to them, who brought the Woman taken in Adultry; he that is without Sin, let him caſt the firſt Stone. Infirmities, Faults and Sin he had, but he felt them, and knew them, and mourned under them; but rejoiced that he was compleat in *Chriſt*, and not in himſelf.

Others will ſay, you have ſaid nothing of what he gained by preaching, that is a Myſtery that belongs to your Art. To ſuch I muſt only anſwer, if there was no more got than by preaching the Goſpel faithfully, it would be a poor Pittance. Ah, but, ſay others, he died worth ſo much Money, a very large Sum. I dare ſay not quite ſo much

much as our dignified Biſhops * gain in one Year, for doing worſe than nothing.† But we have one more heavy Charge, ſay his Enemies, that is, he made many run mad. That I do not believe, for if any run mad, it is commonly for want of Religion, not in the Ways of Religion. From theſe Things we ſee that a Man ſo greatly beloved had Enemies; nor was he free from Calumny and Reproach. But now he ſleeps in the Grave, he knows nothing of it, and bleſſed be God, he did not mind it while in this World, for ſo perſecuted they the Prophets that were before him. I now conclude with a brief Improvement.

* Since I delivered this Sermon, I have good Authority to ſay, that Mr. WHITEFIELD died worth no more than 1500l. the greateſt Part of which was Legacies, left by different Friends, and the Reſidue Mrs. WHITEFIELD's Fortune, viz. 800l.

† His late Majeſty certainly thought the Biſhops did but very little, for, when he was applied to (I think by an honourable Clergyman) to find out ſome Means to ſilence Mr. WHITEFIELD, and prevent him preaching, he made a Reply to this Effect. "Make him a Biſhop, and you may be ſure he will not preach much."

First, From what has been ſaid, the Death of Miniſters is a loud Call to Miniſters that are ſpared, to uſe Diligence in their Work, as they know not how ſoon or ſuddenly they may be called from hence by Death.

Secondly, The Providence that hath bereaved the Church of a faithful Miniſter, by Death, ſhould lead us all to enquire, Whether we are wiſe to Salvation? If not, when the Lord, the Judge comes, inſtead of ſhining as the Brightneſs of the Firmament, we ſhall be caſt out into outer Darkneſs, where there is weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth.

Thirdly and Laſtly, Let thoſe that love the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, be conſtant in Prayer to beſeech him, to fill up the Loſſes in the Church by the Death of Miniſters, that others may be called into the ſame Work, for the making many wiſe to Salvation; let ſuch rejoice in the Proſpect of joining the Church triumphant, where all the redeemed of *Chriſt* ſhall ſing the ſame Song, and univerſally aſcribe Salvation to him that ſitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

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